

## Funding Solutions

The campus community is being asked to solve the U of A's budget dilemma.

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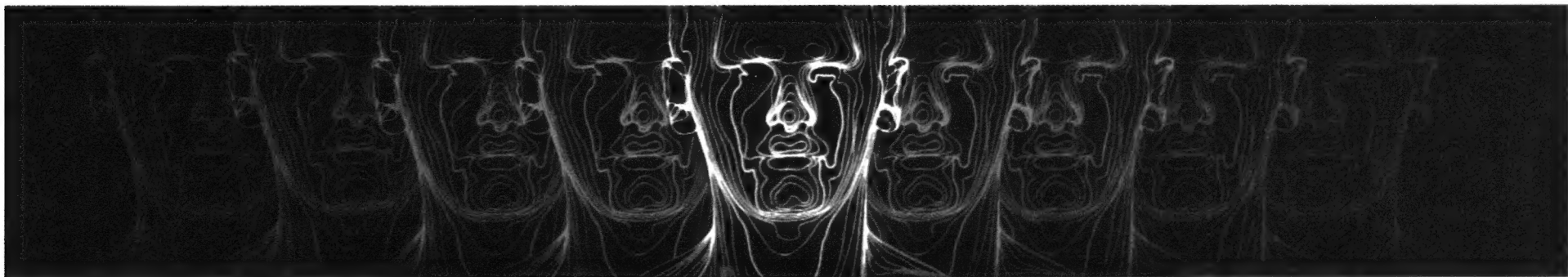
## The many faces of cloning

One of the creators of Dolly the sheep joins in with U of A researchers to encourage cloning in medical research.

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## News source

Folio's next publication date is September 6. Until then, find all your U of A news at [www.ualberta.ca/expressnews](http://www.ualberta.ca/expressnews).



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# folio

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## U of A takes first in Corporate Challenge

### Participants end 10-year lock on title

By Richard Cairney

It has taken blood, sweat and a few close calls. Now, the University of Alberta's Corporate Challenge team has won all the marbles. After finishing in second place for two consecutive years, U of A faculty and staff blew local competitors away to win a first-place finish in the city-wide corporate challenge.

The win ends a decade-long stranglehold Telus and the Edmonton Police Service held on the division championship until this year. Overall, the event involves some 17,000 competitors from 160 companies and government agencies competing against one another in more than 20 events.

"If you take a look at that trophy, it has belonged to the police and Telus all along. They are the only people who have won this thing," said U of A Corporate Challenge committee chair John Younk. "We've broken the chain. I was impressed with our whole team, the way we performed and conducted ourselves."

This year, the U of A's strongest competition came from Epcor. The city-owned utility had held the lead in the Red Division, the largest category in the games, until the final few events.

"We'd been battling Epcor all the way through this," said Younk. "They really showed up strong at a lot of events."

Younk said the rate of participation played an important role in this year's victory. Approximately 140 faculty and staff were involved this year, including volunteers, up from about 100 last year. Recruitment of players was changed this year to involve as many members of the U of A campus community as possible.

Team captains were asked to stage try-outs, allowing more people to participate in the Corporate Challenge. Even if someone wasn't chosen to compete in an event, they still had the opportunity to meet colleagues in a recreational setting and were invited to cheer teams on.

The strategy didn't necessarily guarantee gold medals in every event, though, said Younk.

"We took first place in badminton this year, and that was it for gold medals," he said. "I guess it goes to show the breadth



U of A mascot Patches and Corporate Challenge participants hoist the trophy for first place at the games' closing ceremonies.

of our teams, how many teams placed. Last year we had a gold medal run—I think we had five or something. This year we earned lots of silvers and bronze medals and everything from first to sixth place finishes, and they all count for something."

A change to the Corporate Challenge itself this year meant teams were rewarded for showing spirit, and for cheering on their own team members as well as competitors from other teams. An adopt-a-team scheme initiated this year helped promote the idea of different U of A teams showing up to support one another.

"At these events, when it comes to competitions themselves, people get serious about it. But our goal was also to get the best team out there, spirit wise, and we came in second in spirit points," said Younk.

That's due in no small part to Cameron Library circulation clerk Russell Eccles, who spent many long hours wearing the U of A Patches mascot costume at

different events.

"I think Patches only missed one event—the guy was all over the place," said Younk.

"I had a lot of fun," said Eccles, who showed up to cheer on the U of A ladies golf team at 6:30 a.m., and went through no small amount of discomfort at the hot, humid swimming events. In one day, he cheered on 8-ball, bowling, mountain bike racing and badminton teams.

"It was nice to see how our teams were responding to having Patches out there," said Eccles. "It gives the competitors a little lift—it's nice to have people cheering you on, but when your mascot's there, that's something a little extra. Patches really sticks out and people know there is U of A support. I think it makes a difference."

Eccles, who is also a vice-president with NASA, is a veteran of U of A Corporate Challenge teams, having organized and competed with horseshoe and 8-ball teams. He said this year's

involvement by the U of A was stellar.

"The very first year I was involved, when it came to opening ceremonies there were two of us who showed up," he said. "So it was nice to see all of the people participating this year compared to the past. And coming in first was pretty sweet too."

While Younk intends to compete again next year, he will step down as chair of the Corporate Challenge organizing committee. The position will be taken over by Valerie Hunter, a member of this year's organizing committee.

Hunter said a questionnaire sent out to all participants this year would help improve the event. And the expertise and enthusiasm of people like Younk and Eccles is a solid foundation to build on.

"We need competitive and enthusiastic people like John and Russell and the know-how of people from Campus Recreation," said Hunter. "We've got a huge job ahead of us to get even more people involved." ■

"It was nice to see how our teams were responding to having Patches out there. It gives the competitors a little lift—it's nice to have people cheering you on but when your mascot's there, that's something a little extra. Patches really sticks out and people know there is U of A support. I think it makes a difference."

—Russell Eccles







# The many faces of cloning

*Dolly's creator supports U of A researchers in cloning plans*

By Stephen Osadetz

With truly great scientific discoveries, that fundamentally change our understanding of the world we live in or what it means to be a human being, there comes a sense of excitement, of profound wonder. But there's a profound risk, too. What do we do if our leap in scientific knowledge is so great that we land far beyond our ability to grapple with the changes that come with it? What if an advance, in all its new possibility, leaves us behind?

This is the problem the world faces today. In 1996, Dr. Keith Campbell and his colleagues at the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh created Dolly, a sheep that looks like any other, but was in fact the world's first clone. In a turning point that history will probably remember as monumental, people the world over were forced to wrestle with a new set of ineluctable questions, for the science of cloning poses problems to which no satisfying solutions exist.

The first and most obvious question, though a complicated one, concerns the extent to which cloning should be allowed. One of cloning's difficulties is that there is no single technique or purpose to cloning, and each strategy and method raises its own ethical problems. These were front and centre at the University of Alberta two weeks ago when Campbell, who has moved his research to the University of Nottingham in England, shared his insights into cloning during the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry's annual Walter C. Mackenzie Lecture. Though much of Campbell's talk focused on the scientific aspects of cloning—he was, of course, speaking to the university's scientific community—the ethical problems framed Campbell's address.

Cloning of humans for reproductive purposes, the form of cloning that most people think of first, that idea the popular media idolizes, is also the type of cloning that the scientific community virtually unanimously agrees is abhorrent. "Human reproductive cloning," Campbell said, "is entirely out of the question." Simply, it is insupportable from both a scientific and an ethical viewpoint. Technically, human cloning could be done, but from the scientific point of view, it's much too dangerous. Cloning is a fledgling science, and it's very unreliable—of the 277 original cloned cells that Campbell made at first, only one was fully viable, producing Dolly. From the ethical standpoint, there's just no good reason to start cloning humans. Even if it were done, it would have horrible effects on all parties involved: the public would be furious, a clone's mother would face unbearable notoriety, and the clone would be under enormous pressure to behave like the person he or she was cloned from.

Despite the chorus of arguments against human cloning, it may have already happened. Rogue Italian physician Dr. Severino Antinori has claimed to have impregnated a woman, somewhere in the world, with the first human clone. His claims are vague and the scientific community is skeptical, but if he has done what he claims, the implications would be enormous, breaching scientific, political and ethical standards. Dr. James Shapiro,

the renowned U of A researcher who co-developed the Edmonton Protocol, a treatment for Type-1 diabetes, and the person who brought Campbell in for the talk, doubts Antinori's claim. Shapiro says the science of cloning is so unstable that a human birth would be unlikely. And unwanted.

"Scientists are all dead against the concept of making a person from a clone—unless you're this crazy guy in Italy, that is. It's not a reasonable thing to do." To clone a human would be to push cloning further beyond the ethical guidelines that are struggling to constrain it.

It was no coincidence that Shapiro brought Campbell to the U of A—the diabetes specialist has a vested interest in human cloning, one that illustrates a much more positive possible benefit of the science, but also one that is mired in deep ethical issues. This form of cloning is therapeutic. Instead of cloning an entire organism, only certain cells would be cloned for specific treatments. According to Shapiro, cloning, or nuclear transfer as it is referred to by scientists, could be used to mass-produce insulin-secreting islet cells, the key to his diabetes treatment. Currently, islet cells are taken from deceased donors, a technique that isn't practical, as there simply aren't enough donors to meet the demands of the diabetes population.

Campbell, Shapiro, and one of Shapiro's colleagues, Dr. Jonathan Lakey, director of the U of A Human Islet Isolation Laboratory, met in Singapore to discuss alternate islet cell sources that could be used in the future. Impressed by Campbell, Shapiro invited him to Canada to give the lecture. Since meeting, the three have remained in frequent contact.

"The amazing news now is the role of cloning in producing a stem cell," Campbell said, describing the realm of cloning that could be of benefit to the Edmonton Protocol team. Stem cells are undifferentiated cells which can make any cell type in the body. The hope that Shapiro and his colleagues hold is that stem cells, which can produce islet cells, could be cloned and implanted into people with Type-1 diabetes, treating their disease and possibly even curing it.

But the ethical problems and public confusion surrounding the complexities of such therapeutic cloning may overshadow its huge potential benefits. Nowhere are these problems more evident than in the Canadian government's answer to the cloning debate. Bill C-56, entitled An Act Respecting Assisted Human Reproduction bans human cloning for reproductive purposes, its primary goal, but its stance on

therapeutic cloning is a little more difficult to interpret. While Shapiro is optimistic that the bill "leaves the window open so that scientists can continue their research within ethical guidelines," other U of A researchers aren't so sure.

Dr. Timothy Caulfield, research director of the U of A-based Health Law Institute, and Dr. Glenn Griener of the John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre at the U of A, both have serious misgivings about the bill. Caulfield thinks that under the new bill, human reproductive cloning and many forms of therapeutic cloning would be considered criminal offences, punishable with a prison sentence. Though he recognizes the bill is a step in the right direction from a government standing committee, which proposed last year to ban all human cloning whatsoever, Caulfield also says the proposed legislation makes a fundamental error. It brings cloning into the abortion debate.

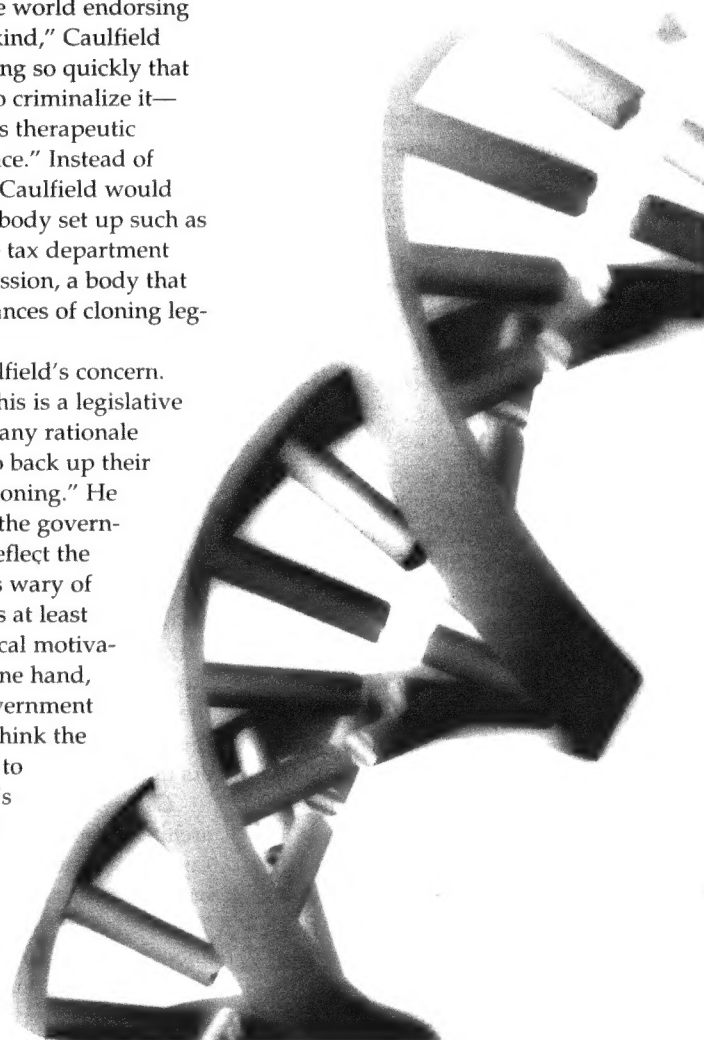
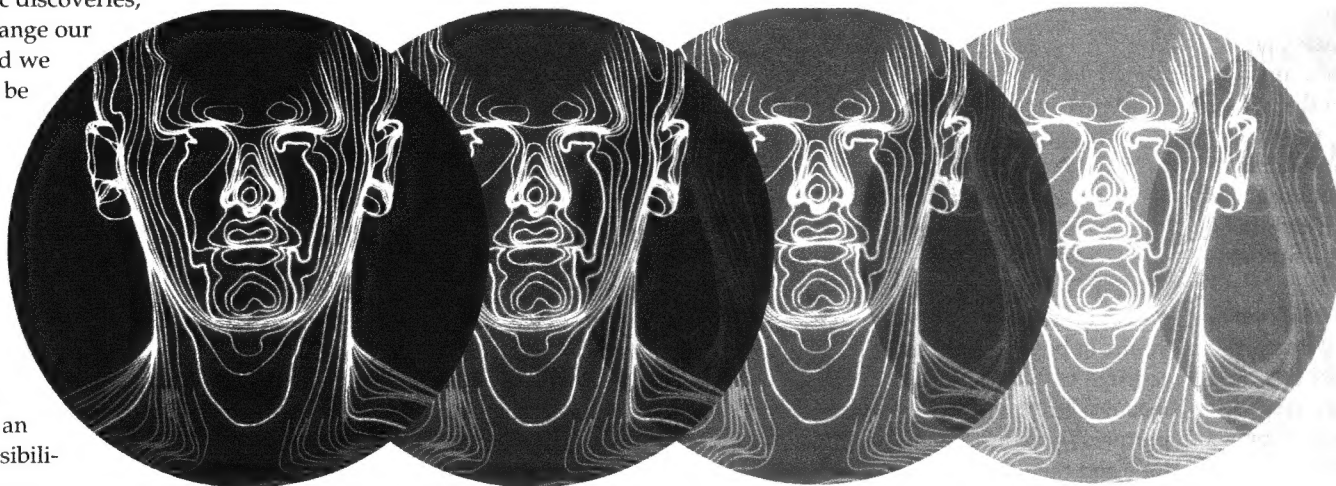
In an effort to be as broad as possible, Caulfield says, the bill confuses a cloned human stem cell with an human embryo. Even if a cloned stem cell originally came from an adult, if it started dividing, it would be considered under the bill to be an embryo. "There have been several reports from around the world endorsing human cloning of this kind," Caulfield said. "This area is moving so quickly that it would be a mistake to criminalize it—and this certainly makes therapeutic cloning a criminal offence." Instead of such global legislation, Caulfield would like to see a regulatory body set up such as those that deal with the tax department and the security commission, a body that could deal with the nuances of cloning legislation.

Griener echoes Caulfield's concern. "My own view is that this is a legislative mistake. I haven't seen any rationale from the government to back up their stance on therapeutic cloning." He supposes, though, that the government is attempting to reflect the views of a public that is wary of cloning. This, he says, is at least driven by the right ethical motivation. "Though, on the one hand, there's virtue in the government consulting scientists, I think the government also needs to worry about the public's perception [of cloning], as well. They need to take account of the variety of ethical opinions, and there are parts of the bill that

clearly provide the necessary political compromise."

Caulfield, though, is putting together a survey of public opinions about cloning from around the world, and he doesn't find the public wariness one might expect. The support for embryonic stem cell research, he says, ranges from 60 - 86 per cent. "The media," he said, "makes it sound like there's a divide amongst Canadians, and I don't see it at all." Instead, he says, the government is responding to a passionate and organized voice of a minority that is against such cloning.

Whatever the outcome, the implications of the cloning debate, he says, run deep: "This whole debate raises very interesting questions about how we as a society are going to make decisions about complex science-based issues, and, as we move towards more science-based societies, I think that raises some interesting questions for liberal democracies in the future." ■





# message from the • president

## Season is symbolic of our progress

*And as summer heats up, so will campus activities*

By Dr. Rod Fraser

Ninety-four years ago, a group of visionaries stood on this 250-acre patch of scrubby wilderness and declared they were going to build a university that would be world-renowned. Today, as our campus erupts into the visual and floral vibrancy of spring, I can't help but think of how far our university has come and the future of successes and achievements that are still to bloom.

I am proud to stand up as a cheerleader for our outstanding team. Our progressive university continues to spring forward, with growth, in pursuit of our vision of indisputable recognition, nationally and internationally.

Without the exceptional quality of teaching taking place at the University of Alberta, this bold vision would not be attainable. We maintain the lead, by a wide margin, on all Canadian universities,

in the number of 3M Teaching Fellowships awarded. With 23, our university remains first in the number of fellowships given since 1996. We are truly meeting the challenge of educating the leaders of tomorrow, preparing them to participate and excel in the new global economy.

As our research revenues have surged from \$84 million in 1994/95 to more than \$300 million in 2001/02, it is evident that we continue to excel in research endeavours. In putting University of Alberta research to work, we are committed to reconnect, reinvigorate and enhance our partnerships with public and private sectors, and the voluntary and non-profit sectors. Working together we are harnessing the intellectual capacity of our university community through strategic research partnerships. In achieving this goal, we have established and won 11 Natural

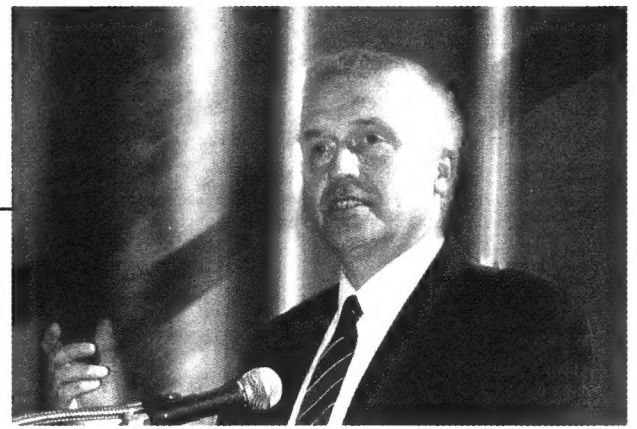
Science and Engineering Research Council Industrial Chairs, allowing us to claim six more than our closest competitors.

In this success, we continue to provide a campus for the community. Together, with partners, we are providing opportunities, facilities and experiences to our community of Edmonton. For example, this weekend (June 13-16), through the stellar efforts of Dr. Franz Szabo and our Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies, a world's first is coming to Edmonton: the first ever Carl Czerny Music Festival. Music scholars from around the world and community members will have the opportunity to gather at the University of Alberta and Winspear Centre to rediscover the music of Carl Czerny, composer and student of Beethoven's. The festival will feature the world premier of some pieces that have

been, up until this point, housed in archives in Vienna.

As spring becomes summer, young scholars and athletes will flood our campus experiencing a taste of life at the U of A, while attending summer camps. From sciences to basketball and computer technology to volleyball, students will be mentored, through various programs, from some of our university's best and brightest.

And toward the end of each summer, as campus prepares for the return of our students and the hustle and bustle that characterizes the opening of fall term, the President's office hosts a staff picnic to show our gratitude for the efforts of all who help keep the University of Alberta functioning. I invite you to join me at the President's Annual Picnic on August 8 and until then, wish each one of you an enjoyable summer. ■



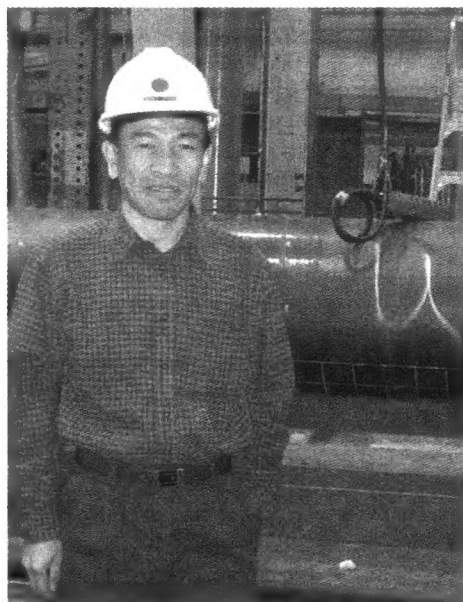
## Killam Professor devotes life to building students and structures

*Roger Cheng takes a smart approach to his work*

By Stephen Osadetz

The approach that Dr. Roger Cheng takes to constructing a structure, be it a bridge, building, or pipeline, is very similar to the approach he takes to developing his students. He describes it as a "life-cycle" approach, a "smart" approach, and it works well for him, his projects, and his students. Not only was Cheng named one of this year's Killam Professors, an award for "outstanding career achievements," but he'll also take over as chair of the department of civil and environmental engineering in the beginning of July. The Killam Professorships are worth \$100,000 each.

The old way of doing structural engineering seems positively archaic when set beside Cheng's "integrated" method. If a researcher were to study a pipeline 20 years ago, for example, he would focus on a single, specific area—the behaviour of the steel, perhaps, or the structural mechanics of the pipeline. Now, though, Cheng is taking a totally different



Killam Award winner Dr. Roger Cheng.

approach with "smart" materials and "smart" structures. In the case of smart

materials and structures, the "smart" actually means two different things: smart materials are those high performance materials that can adjust their material properties according to their needs; smart structures are constructions that use fibre optic sensors in a way similar to how humans use nerves—the structure assesses its own state. The sum of these two "smart" technologies is that Cheng is taking a more integrated approach to engineering. Instead of relying solely on part experience to build buildings, Cheng can actually get the buildings to participate in their own maintenance.

In effect, Cheng says, "the structural engineer is becoming more like a doctor." If structural engineers 20 years ago approached their medicine with herbal remedies and old wives' tales, then Cheng, to follow the analogy, has access to state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment. One of the implications of this new approach to structural engineering is that it becomes

very difficult to pin down Cheng's exact area of expertise. Instead of focussing on a single material or a single type of structure, Cheng is able to leap over the old barriers that set the categories of his craft apart. He is at once interested in steel, wood and polymers as materials, and pipelines, bridges, and buildings as structures. Also, when one builds something these days, one does it with the future repairs and maintenance that will have to be done in mind.

This approach is very similar to Cheng's approach to teaching, another area that was important to his winning of the Killam Professorship. For him, it is the opportunity to teach that makes university life such a joy. "The opportunity to teach is one of the major reasons why I stay at the university. Although doing research can give you some personal satisfaction, teaching gives you the greatest reward. To watch a student mature—grow up—is the best feeling I have ever had." ■

## Donors honoured at Celebration Plaza

*Landmark thanks campaign donors*

By Gilbert A. Bouchard

What better way to symbolize the partnership between the University of Alberta and its community donors than a celebration entrance on one of the busiest intersections on campus?

Celebration Plaza will serve as both a permanent thank you to donors who supported the university's 1995-2000 fundraising campaign and a convenient place to meet and relax. Names of all 1,500 donors who contributed \$5,000 or more to the campaign are engraved on heavy glass plaques bolted to the four large pillars that anchor the plaza.

During the official VIP-studded opening recently—complete with festive refreshment tents and a jaunty Dixieland band—U of A President Rod Fraser noted

the plaza had already become an "informal meeting place for visitors to the campus, staff and students."

Sitting on the corner of 89th Ave. and 114th St., the centrally-located Celebration Plaza is "more than just bricks, Tyndal Stone and plaques," said Fraser. For him, the plaza symbolizes the close relationship the university must have with its supporters in order to best serve the community.

Cathryn Chopko Beck, the landscape architect responsible for the park's design, says the location was specifically chosen because it was such a high-profile location "everybody on campus would know about," nestled as it is between the Administration Building, University Hall and the Students' Union Building.

The unique design for the park's "hardscape" (four pillars partially joined by two bench-high curving walls built to serve as permanent seating areas) was created with an eye for future expansion and also to best fit into the university's physical design.

Case in point—the serpentine shape of the structure weaves amongst the area's mature botanical specimens including some impressively large elm trees.

"We chose Tyndal Stone because it's an important university building material, and we chose a rough surface treatment to contrast the smooth textures we see around the plaza," says Beck of the \$90,000 park. "This is meant to be a year-round space for events and a nice place to sit on a

sunny day."

The event was attended by dozens of donors, some of whom had come quite a long way to celebrate the institution they supported during the five-year, \$194-million campaign. Dr. John Stephens, for instance, flew in from Portland, Oregon to revisit his alma mater and the "magnificent" new park honouring its beneficiaries.

"My donation was to honour what they gave me, so it was a beautiful surprise to be honoured back," says the 84-year-old, class-of-'44 retired physician who continued his studies in Boston and Montreal.

"The faculty here were so caring and amazing to me. I really felt encouraged in all my endeavours." ■



# Friendship, advice, and cookies

**Academic-in-Residence program provides unique lessons**

By Stephen Osadetz

Three years ago, on Bev LeMoine's first day as Lister Hall's Academic-in-Residence, she found a teary-eyed and bewildered girl in the dorm's lobby. Having just arrived from Hong Kong, unable to speak English, and carrying a \$30,000 certified cheque, the girl needed help. "She was so stunned that it didn't even occur to her that she shouldn't be carrying all her money with her at once," said LeMoine, who is coming to the end of her final year in the position.

After LeMoine helped to get the new student on her feet, the two became good friends. The Academic-in-Residence job, LeMoine soon discovered, is a balancing act—at once she's a friend, stand-in mom, peer, and academic advisor. "Most of all, though, it's like being part of a large family," she said.

But even though she took this job as a leave of absence from her position as a principal at a grade school in Newfoundland, nothing could have fully prepared her for her experience at Lister Hall. The "large family" LeMoine has become a part of has of 1,200 kids. For some of the students she works with, the size of this population is overwhelming. "Some students come from small towns that are smaller than Lister Hall," she said.

The position provides her with a spacious apartment in the bottom of Lister from which she lives and works. It is a place where students can come to see her, whatever their problems. Each Sunday, with a kind of open house, LeMoine would have students into her apartment to



Bev LeMoine's three-year odyssey as Academic in Residence is coming to a close.

bake cookies. The cookies and company became so popular that, just before Christmas, LeMoine made 30 batches in one sitting. That night, the bakers broke three mixers. "I just couldn't go any further with the cookies, so I had to get the students to help me," she said.

Formally, LeMoine works with Lister's Academic Team, or A-Team, a group of students that co-ordinates academically oriented events. This year, for instance, the

team set up study aid seminars and brought in guest speakers such as Edmonton Oilers general manager Kevin Lowe, and a member of Canadian Security Intelligence Service.

When she wasn't working with the students from Lister, LeMoine was busy completing her PhD in the Faculty of Educational Policy Studies. The sum benefit of her two positions is that the students see LeMoine as both peer and role

"I've got a completely different perspective on the potential that young people have to change the world, to take responsibility for it."

—Bev LeMoine

model—when she was writing her thesis, for instance, the Listerites saw her up to her neck in work. "The students know that, in order to be successful, you have to focus—you have to live a structured life," LeMoine said.

LeMoine is the third person to hold the Academic-in-Residence position at Lister—the program

was the first of its kind in Canada. The idea of such a program has begun to spread, and there are now similar positions at the University of Saskatchewan and at HUB here on campus.

Though it would be easy to think that balancing life as a graduate student and as the Academic in Residence would be exhausting, even overwhelming, LeMoine's experience has been fabulous. She's practically giddy when talking about the position.

"I've got a completely different perspective on the potential that young people have to change the world, to take responsibility for it."

Housing and Residence Life is currently seeking an Academic-in-Residence for Lister Hall and HUB. For more information or to apply, contact Tracey Mason at 492-0879 or e-mail her at [tracey.mason@ualberta.ca](mailto:tracey.mason@ualberta.ca). ■

## Construction set to start on new student residence

**Lister Hall complex will house some 400 more students.**

By Richard Cairney

Some time within the next two weeks the pastoral front entrance to the Lister Hall student residence will be transformed into a construction site.

"You'll have to walk in here through the hoarding, and the noise," said David Bruch, the University of Alberta's director of Housing and Food Services.

The \$24-million project should wrap up in September with the completion of two buildings: a 12-storey residence that will provide accommodation for approximately 400 students, and a two-storey building that will house a food court and gym for the Lister students.

Approved by the Board of Governors in May, the new student residence is urgently needed. By August of last year the university had received 3,272 applications for about 650 student residence vacancies. By May of this year, demand had grown to more than 4,000 applications for the same number of rooms.

"Student housing is a huge issue for the university," said Bruch. "We've been turning students away now every year since 1998."

And if Student Housing is turning students away, that means the U of A as a whole is turning students away.

"In a lot of cases, if we can't provide housing for students, they'll go to another university that can provide them with housing," said Bruch. "If you are a young person leaving home for the first time, moving to a big city, and you are going through all these major transitions in your life, your family wants you to be well

taken care of. Student residences are places that help young people with all of those transitions."

One of the university's strategic initiatives is to recruit students who achieve academic excellence. It is unable to meet that goal if it can't provide housing for such students. Other universities guarantee housing to students who earn high grades, and this fall, the U of A will begin the same kind of program.

Other issues need to be dealt with too, such as consulting with the neighbouring community and mitigating any impact construction will have on campus. One effect will be the loss of about 20 mature trees that would not survive transplantation.

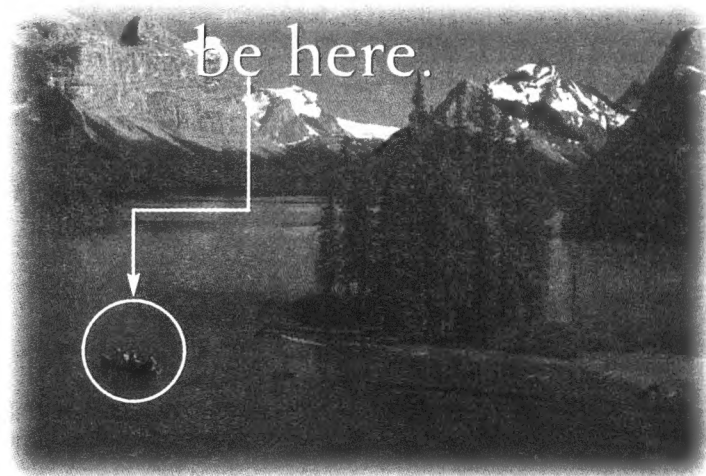
"We feel badly that these trees will be cut down, but we are working with our grounds keepers and an external arbor to see what we can do: we're trying to find out if we can do something like plant three new trees somewhere else for every one we lose here."

The tennis courts on the site will also be removed.

And Bruch said the university is also aware that it still won't be able to accommodate the ever-increasing demand for housing, even with the new residences and a program that will see many first-year students "double up" with roommates this fall.

"We will still be turning away a lot of students, and so one of the things we are doing is some preliminary planning on a proposed international residence, but that's a long way off." ■

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# Campus community's input needed to solve budget dilemma

## THE PROBLEM

Despite burgeoning research revenues, capital construction funding and a successful fundraising campaign, the University of Alberta faces a structural deficit. Dollars available for operating costs do not meet expenses.

Unchecked, this problem will grow and seriously compromise our ability to maintain momentum toward world-class excellence.

To balance the budget by 2005-2006, the University of Alberta needs to reduce overall costs by \$3.3 million and increase operating revenue by \$21 million. This is in addition to the savings achieved with across-campus cuts, already implemented.

## THE SOLUTION

The first step was the establishment of the Funding Solutions Task Force (FSTF). This task force is charged with developing and implementing a process to find innovative cost containment and revenue enhancement opportunities. They will do this by consulting widely across campus and investigating all opportunities presented.

"We have to believe there are efficiencies to be found within an almost \$400 million operating budget and look carefully to see if there are things we are doing that are cultural, rather than necessary," said Dr. Doug Owsram, Provost and Vice President (Academic).

Each portfolio, student and staff association has presented a list of potential cost-containment and revenue-enhancement opportunities to the task force.

"The ideas that have already come forward to the Funding Solutions Task Force are exactly the type of thing we're looking for," said Owsram. "It's a clear demonstration that U of A faculty and staff and students have the ingenuity we need to meet our funding challenges."

U of A President Rod Fraser said the campus-wide effort is key to the university's continuing success. "Stability in our operating budget is critical to maintaining our momentum. The University of Alberta

has enjoyed unprecedented success towards our vision to be indisputably recognized, thanks entirely to the efforts of our faculty and staff," he said. "We need these same individuals to rise to this challenge with the ingenuity they demonstrate every day."

Co-chaired by Nazim Merali, chief financial officer and associate vice president (finance and administration) and Art Quinney, associate vice-president (academic), the FSTF will follow important guiding principles:

- Cost containment and revenue options will be identified in the context of their contribution to the university's academic mission and strategic priorities.

- Every effort will be made to maintain stability within the university
- Any and all options are to be reviewed and analyzed.
- Options must reflect a full costing and assessment
- Downloading expenditures or imposing new charges to university faculties or operating units is to be avoided.
- The university is committed to communicating with the associations and adhering at all times to our collective agreement responsibilities as we move through this process.
- The decision-making process will be transparent.

## THE NEXT STEPS

More than 120 opportunities to reduce costs and generate revenue have been submitted to the FSTF Working Group by portfolios, students and staff associations.

"This process is designed to be inclusive. We're asking the entire University of Alberta community to tell us what we can do better, and we're committing time and resources to thoroughly and thoughtfully explore the suggestions that come in."

—Art Quinney



The entire campus community is being asked to help find efficiencies

These were classified into immediate, medium and long-term opportunities.

Several themes developed, which will be explored in depth by expert panels.

The campus community is being asked to forward written submissions to any panel.

Each panel will accept information and feedback from groups key to their particular challenge and each will seek benchmark information from peer institutions and private industry.

- July 17, 2002: Expert Panels submit an interim report to the Funding Solutions Task Force.
- August 26, 2002: Expert Panels submit recommendations to the Funding Solutions Task Force.
- September 20, 2002: FSTF submits a recommendations to the Executive Planning Committee
- Fall 2002: Recommendations to be endorsed where appropriate by EPC or

Governance Committee followed by implementation.

Task force co-chairs Merali and Quinney say the U of A community needs to tap its own expertise to come up with long-term solutions. The process won't end there.

"We need to continually question why we do things and ask how we can do them more effectively in support of our mission," says Merali. "This can't be a one-time exercise. It has to be a new way of doing business."

Quinney said the innovative approach will have an added benefit of strengthening the U of A community.

"This process is designed to be inclusive," he said. "We're asking the entire University of Alberta community to tell us what we can do better, and we're committing time and resources to thoroughly and thoughtfully explore the suggestions that come in." ■

## Funding Solutions Q & A

**Will this problem go away if there is a windfall in government revenues?**

No. There are numerous issues and interests competing for government dollars. Even with surpluses, there are only so many dollars to go around.

The university would require an annual adjustment of eight to nine per cent of current operating revenue to eliminate the structural deficit. We are not anticipating that the Alberta government will make such adjustments.

**Is this just a negotiating ploy? Is the university pleading poverty to limit the demands of university unions?**

No. The structural deficit did not occur overnight. In fact, the 2000-01 budget document contained a warning that the university's costs were increasing at a rate that was not sustainable. The university was able to forestall the inevitable crunch by turning to one-time funding sources, which are no longer accessible.

The Association of Academic Staff (AAS:UA) and the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) were skeptical when the university began to sound the alarm about the financial situation. Since that time administration and the associations have come together to address a challenge faced by the entire community.

Still, administration does not take

union support for granted. One of the guiding principles of the Funding Solution Task Force is that there will be continuous communication with the associations as the process moves forward.

**Why are we directing funds into construction and renovation if we can't afford to keep what we've got up and running now?**

There are two reasons for this. First, the university's capital budget (for new buildings and related one-time expenses) is separate from its operating budget, which the task force is focusing on. Through its tremendous success in research and teaching, the university has attracted millions of dollars in one-time funding earmarked for new construction and renovation. Of course, once the new buildings are opened, the university is responsible for maintaining them (heat, lights, cleaning, etc.) and the funds for maintenance come from the operating budget. That leads to the second part of the answer.

The title of the 2002-03 budget is Maintaining Momentum. It refers to the momentum the University of Alberta has built over the past number of years toward its goal of becoming indisputably recognized for teaching and research. That vision is dependent on increasing enrol-

ment and research funding. Faculties across the university have made it clear that, to maintain momentum, they need more space. The university could eliminate a portion of the structural deficit by curtailing enrolment and research, and the corresponding need for space, but that would certainly eliminate much of the university's momentum as well. It is a price the community does not wish to pay.

**During the early 1990s the university made huge cuts that caused a lot of stress and pain. Is this task force just a way of softening an inevitable blow?**

No. The task force wants to help the university to avoid such a painful blow. Organizations have traditionally erased deficits by making deep cuts that inevitably cost people their jobs. The university has turned to a new way of solving the problem. With the right kind of involvement from the campus community the exercise will be exciting and positive.

**Who can guarantee that, at the end of the day, there will be no job losses?**

Nobody can make such a guarantee. There is, however, one thing no one disputes: the University of Alberta is a superior university because of the people who work here. When we lose people, we lose part of our strength.

**You identify nine expert panels to**

**look at solutions. Surely the university has more than just nine areas of concern.**

The nine panels represent the broad areas highlighted in the first round of suggestions that came to the Funding Solutions Task Force; no significant theme was overlooked.

It is true there are other pressing concerns facing the university, but these issues are still very much alive, and there are numerous initiatives happening now that may well result in the kinds of efficiencies the Task Force will identify. For example: the just-announced Research Services Office will consolidate many of the services now offered by a number of different units; Human Resources is developing a comprehensive plan to build a culture of innovation and to train, develop, recruit and retain academic and non-academic staff; there is an initiative to place all university policies and procedures in a central, searchable database that will streamline decision-making and save resources; the enterprise-wide risk evaluation resulted in new initiatives that target such areas as restricted revenues, physical infrastructure and fund development; and the four-year strategic planning process will strengthen accountability and better co-ordinate initiatives across the university. ■



# —Maintaining Momentum

## How you can get involved

The Funding Solutions Task Force has established nine expert panels to examine different areas of university operations to find ways to save costs and generate new revenues. The following are brief descriptions of each panel. You can find out more about each panel and make written submissions at: [www.creative.ualberta.ca/funding](http://www.creative.ualberta.ca/funding).

### ANCILLARY AND CHARGE-BACK EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Philip Stack, director of resource planning

With the goal of identifying revenue and cost-containment opportunities within ancillaries and charge-back units, the mandate of the expert panel is to recommend on the following:

- A more cost-effective and innovative administrative structure in operating the ancillary and charge-back operations.
- Benchmarking against industry and peer institutions.
- Changes to the current policy on ancillary units.
- New innovative revenue enhancement opportunities within any of the units or potential new units.
- Whether the university should continue in the direct provision of services currently provided by ancillaries and charge-back units.
- Estimated time line for implementation of changes.
- Estimated cost containment and revenue opportunities over four years.

*\*Any potential opportunities for outsourcing of ancillaries or charge-back units will be communicated to the expert panel on outsourcing for review and follow-up.*

### EARLY RETIREMENT EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Dan Charlton, director of support staff, human resources

With the goal of identifying cost-containment opportunities in regards to early retirement for support staff and administrative officers, the mandate of the expert panel is to recommend on:

- Early retirement options that would benefit staff, employing departments and

the university as a whole, taking into consideration the short and long-term demographic issues facing the university and the need to contain and reduce costs.

- Benchmarking against industry and peer institutions.

### ASSET MANAGEMENT EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Phyllis Clark, Vice President (Finance and Administration)

With the goal of identifying revenue and cost containment opportunities by more effectively leveraging our assets, the mandate of the expert panel is to recommend on:

- Opportunities to sell or lease university buildings or properties.
- Innovative approaches to enhanced utilization of our assets.
- Evaluation of the most effective means of leveraging the university's assets to achieve the greatest return.
- Benchmarking against industry and peer institutions.
- Means to achieve more effective use of existing space.
- Estimated time line for implementation of changes.
- Estimated revenue opportunities over four years.

### COMMUNICATIONS EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Lee Elliott, director, Public Affairs

With the goal of identifying cost-containment opportunities around the University's internal and external communications structures and processes, the mandate of the expert panel is to recommend on:

- A more cost-effective and innovative administrative structure in providing the university's internal and external communications.
- Benchmarking against industry and peer institutions.
- Specific cost-saving opportunities in the provision of internal and external communications.
- Estimated time line for implementation of any changes.
- Estimated cost containment opportunities over four years

### CURRICULUM EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Dr. Gretchen Hess, professor of Educational Psychology

With the goal of identifying cost containment opportunities and improved efficiency in the delivery of curriculum, the expert panel is to recommend on:

- Opportunities to reduce and streamline the number of courses/sections offered by faculties.
- Opportunities for innovations in curriculum that will lead to a more cost-effective delivery of courses.
- Benchmarking with peer institutions.
- Estimated time line for implementation of any changes.
- Estimated cost containment opportunities over four years.

### UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Dr. Art Quinney, Associate VP (Academic)

With the goal of identifying cost-containment opportunities and improved efficiency in the governance operations, the mandate of the expert panel is to recommend on:

- A more cost-effective and innovative administrative structure in providing support to the university's governance activities. (Board of Governors, Secretariat and Senate)
- Benchmarking with peer institutions.
- Streamlining governance committee structures.
- Estimated time line for implementation of any changes.
- Estimated cost containment opportunities over four years.

### OUTSOURCING EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Dr. Mike Percy, Dean, School of Business

With the goal of identifying innovative opportunities for the delivery of service, improved efficiency, revenue enhancement and cost containment opportunities, the mandate of the expert panel is to recommend on:

- The proposed policy on outsourcing.
- Potential opportunities for outsourcing

as identified by the panel or recommended by the Ancillary and Charge-Back Expert Panel.

- Long-term risks, challenges, benefits associated with outsourcing.
- Benchmarking against peer institutions.
- Estimated time line for implementation of any outsourcing opportunity.
- Estimated revenue or cost containment opportunities over four years.
- The expert panel may also be used as an ongoing resource to assist in any outsourcing initiative that may be implemented.

### PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Nazim Merali, Chief Financial Officer and Associate VP (Finance and Administration)

With the goal of identifying cost-containment opportunities, the mandate of the expert panel is to recommend on:

- Benchmarking against industry and peer institutions.
- Potential strategic sourcing opportunities.
- Estimated time-line for implementation of any sourcing or partnership opportunities.
- Estimated cost containment opportunities over four years.

### TECHNOLOGY EXPERT PANEL

Lead: Dr. Randy Goebel, chair, Department of Computing Science

With the goal of identifying cost-containment opportunities, and acknowledging the responsibility of the Information and Communication Technology task force, the mandate of the expert panel is to recommend on:

- An estimate of Information and Communication Technology costs under our current structure.
- Benchmarking against industry and peer institutions.
- Opportunities of leveraging the IT investment across the university.
- Potential cost-containment opportunities.

*\*The mandate of the panel may be expanded following the recommendations of the ICT task force.*

## What does the success of the Funding Solutions Task Force mean to you?

### Dr. Rod Fraser, President

"The University of Alberta has enjoyed unprecedented success towards our vision to be indisputably recognized. I commend and thank the faculty and staff for their efforts towards establishing our reputation as one of the finest universities, nationally, and internationally amongst a handful of the world's best. In order to propel forward with momentum, stability in our operating budget is critical. It is clear that collaborating and creating, in respect to our current budget challenge, is essential to finding viable solutions. I am confident that through this process, we will lay a great foundation for even greater successes to come."

### Phyllis Clark, Vice President (Finance and Administration)

"The success of this initiative is obviously critically important to the university, my staff and me. No organization can afford to run deficits for the long term and getting the deficit under control is an important priority. In these kinds of reviews, administrative units are always under special scrutiny at universities but I am confident that the

staff in my area are as anxious to find better ways of working as I am."

### Susan Green, Vice President (External Relations)

"The Funding Solutions Task Force is asking us to examine everything we do and look for the most cost-effective approach. External Relations is committed to meeting that exciting challenge. We are already reorganizing and changing to become even more focused and cost effective.

"External Relations directly supports the university's teaching and research mission. We will be exploring new ideas and approaches to containing costs, delivering a successful campaign and continuing to strengthen the university's relationships with donors, alumni, government, business leaders, media, the public and prospective faculty and students."

### Doug Owram Provost and Vice President (Academic)

"The University faces a difficult budgetary situation. The cuts imposed on units are a sign of this but they do not, by them-

selves, resolve the problem. The success of the Funding Solutions Task force will mean that we will find ways to balance the budget while ensuring teaching and research areas receive support for priority areas."

### Dr. Gary Kachanoski, Vice President (Research)

"We have experienced impressive research growth at the University of Alberta and are now, by any measure, clearly one of the top research universities in the country. Adopting a deficit budget in the short-term was necessary to maintain momentum, but this cannot be sustained. The University's budget realities must be dealt with in the longer term in a creative and innovative way, and the Funding Solutions Task Force is well-placed to carry out this important task."

### Joy Correia, President, Non Academic Staff Association

"NASA sees this as one of the first initiatives by administration to offer all sectors of campus the opportunity to have meaningful input into university opera-

tions. Support staff have long recognized situations where better use of university resources could be made by streamlining processes and minimizing waste. University employees will gain from this initiative in two ways: as employees making their own employment secure and who make meaningful contributions on public spending while enhancing university services. NASA welcomes the opportunity to be heard and have a real impact on decisions that impact on our work lives."

### Don Carmichael, President, Academic Staff Association: University of Alberta

"AAS:UA members see the Task Force as a creative response to the budget deficit. We especially appreciate the determination of the Board and administration to deal with the deficit in a manner that avoids the deep cuts of the early 1990s. Indeed, the salary proposals currently under consideration show this quite clearly. Consequently we are working closely with the administration to identify cost-efficiencies in terms that also protect (and enhance) the quality of our programs."

# Call For Letters of Intent to the Health Research Fund

The Health Research Fund (HRF) will provide opportunities for relevant, high-quality health research across the entire spectrum of research areas, including mental health. The Fund is administered by the Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (AHFMR) on behalf of Alberta Health and Wellness.

AHFMR invites individuals/organizations interested in applying for funding to submit a Letter of Intent by **September 6, 2002.**

This Call for Letters of Intent is a competitive process. Based on the opinions of expert reviewers, AHFMR will invite formal proposals from selected applicants. To be successful in the competition at the Letter of Intent stage, and later at the formal proposal stage, projects must meet the following criteria:

- Applications must be submitted by Alberta based teams which include both researchers and decision makers and/or users of health research information;
- Three broad areas of research will be supported: **health**

**services research, population health research, and health technology assessment research;**

- Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of: scientific merit; prevalence of disease or condition; alliances and partnerships; impact on quality of life and health outcomes; impact on broad determinants of health; potential economic impact; research opportunities; and potential to address ethical, legal, and social issues.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO OBTAIN APPLICATION FORMS AND GUIDELINES, PLEASE CONTACT:**

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## Tracing the boundaries of disgust

*The Hydra's Tale examines representations of the vile and putrid*

By Geoff McMaster



Dr. Robert Wilson

There is a scene in Thomas Pynchon's masterpiece, *Gravity's Rainbow*, in which one Brigadier Pudding is described "tenderly" eating feces during a sexual act. The coprophagy is a kind of symptom demonstrating, in the words of Dr. Robert Wilson, "the pollution of the spirit in Pudding—that he must constantly, obsessively trace himself back into the stench of the First World War."

Since the scene erupts in the narrative quite unexpectedly, some readers will throw the book down in disgust, disappointed at having invested so much time in the novel only to be so horrified, says Wilson. But others have found the passage intensely moving, a perfect metaphorical rendering of a certain loathsome cultural and psychological condition.

This example illustrates two points at the heart of Wilson's argument in *The Hydra's Tale: Imagining Disgust*, released this month by University of Alberta Press. First, what is considered disgusting is by no means generally agreed upon or universal. Much depends on historical and cultural conditions, ideological associations and personal predilections.

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, says Wilson, there is a huge, qualitative difference between a 'real' object of disgust in the phenomenal world and its representation in art.

"It is disturbing to a scholar to see people insist that reactions to a represented object must be the same as the reaction to the thing itself," said Wilson, a trace of disgust evident in his voice. Lamenting further on the woeful state of those blind to metaphor: "It's really aesthetics 101—the represented thing and the thing itself are not the same, and people should know that, but of course many don't." High on his list of those who don't are promoters of censorship.

And while there is much in *The Hydra's Tale* to turn the stomach of the faint-hearted reader, Wilson contends the theoretical questions are what interest him most. The category of interrogation could just as easily have been love, hate, beauty, sexuality—it just so happens that representations of the disgusting provide a vivid and graphic model to work with, lending the theory a certain visceral intensity.

*The Hydra's Tale* "is vivid and it's meant to be vivid, but it's also a highly theoretical book. It deals with theoretical positions in greater detail than any other books on the subject," he said.

The theoretical paradox Wilson explores is this: theory is necessary to make some order out of the speed and complexity, the ever-changing mutability, of the phenomenal. But in making the world clearer, in giving it definition, theory tends also to freeze it, slow it down and inevitably distort it. It is what Wilson calls a "tension between specificity in the roiling phenomenal world of disgusting things and the theoretical models that are anti-septic or aseptic and conceptual in nature."

And so he looks for disgust in the "border cases, the scenarios in which disgust emerges abruptly from things that ought not to be disgusting or else marks the transformation of the attractive (or innocent) into its opposite, and those moments, equally problematic, when things that have long been experienced as disgusting suddenly become acceptable, even desirable."

He draws examples primarily from literature and film. Some of the most fruitful, aside from Pynchon's, are found in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, the films of David Cronenberg and David Lynch and the *Alien* trilogy. But in order to frame each chapter, he also refers to his own personal experience, one episode of which involves participation in a 'golden shower.'

And in his early travels as a merchant seaman and circus ringmaster, he tells us in the introduction, he learned to "recognize the sight and smell of rotting fish in Manila, both intense enough to gag a maggot, the reeking odour of human ordure in the Australian bush and quite few unhygienic practices in San Francisco.

"Most significantly, I learned that it is quite possible to eat food that once, under different circumstances, might have nauseated me with overflowing disgust." He admits quite unabashedly that "maggots no longer disgust me."

The path to this topic, which Wilson came upon late in his career, is really not so difficult to understand. He has published on Shakespeare (whose oeuvre has its share of the poetically disgusting) and on game theory, which in its own way explores the nature of flux and transgressed boundaries.

But now that *The Hydra's Tale* has been released upon the world after years of research, it's time to leave it behind, he says. After all, once can only wallow in the stench for so long. ■



# talks & events

Submit talks and events to Cora Doucette by 9 a.m. one week prior to publication. **Folio Talks and Events listings will no longer accept submissions via fax, mail, e-mail or phone. Please enter events you'd like to appear in Folio and on ExpressNews at: <http://www.expressnews.ualberta.ca/ualberta/L2.cfm?c=10>**

## APR 01 - OCT 31 2002

### Standard First Aid/Heartsaver Courses.

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety has arranged for Standard First Aid/Heartsaver courses to be held on campus once again this year. The training is comprised of two full-day sessions (8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) with morning, lunch and afternoon breaks. The cost is \$80.00 per person. The first course will be held in early April and the last at the end of October. Registration is limited due to classroom size. For further information and registration forms please call Cindy Ferris at 492-1810 or e-mail [cindy.ferris@ualberta.ca](mailto:cindy.ferris@ualberta.ca) or visit the home page at <http://www.ehs.ualberta.ca/training.htm#CPR>

## MAY 28 - JUN 16 2002

### Testing the Depths

Event sponsored by Department of Art and Design. Testing the Depths is a Senior Printmaking Exhibition for 2002. The Opening Reception will be held at the Fine Arts Building Gallery on Thursday, May 30, 2002 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Gallery hours are Tuesday to Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. The Gallery is closed Mondays, Saturdays, and Statutory Holidays. Location: Rm. 1-1 Fine Arts Building Gallery, U of A campus, 112 Street and 89 Avenue.

## MAY 27 - JUN 26 2002

### Extension Centre Gallery

Event sponsored by Faculty of Extension. Memory/Suite II, an exhibition of new paintings and drawings by Brenda G. Malkinson. Gallery Hours: Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Info: 492-3034. Location: Extension Centre Gallery, University Extension Centre, 2nd Floor, 8303 - 112 Street, Edmonton.

## MAY 28 - JUN 16 2002

### Recent Paintings: Robert Nichols

Event sponsored by the Department of Art and Design. Recent Paintings by Robert Nichols is the final visual presentation for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Painting. The opening reception for this exhibition will be held at the Fine Arts Building Gallery on Thursday, May 30, 2002. Gallery Hours are Tuesday to Friday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday: 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. The Gallery is closed on Mondays, Saturdays, and Statutory Holidays. Location: Rm. 1-1, Fine Arts Building Gallery, U of A campus, 112 Street and 89 Avenue.

## MAY 15 - DEC 31 2002

### Speakers' Bureau

Academic Technologies for Learning presents the Speakers' Bureau, a series of free sessions on a variety of topics dedicated to advancing the pedagogy of educational technologies at the University of Alberta. Available to faculty members, sessional instructors, and graduate students, we will bring these sessions to the location and time that are convenient for you. For a full listing of sessions, visit the ATL Web site at <http://www.atl.ualberta.ca/>. Speakers' Bureau brochures are available upon request. If these sessions don't meet your needs, we are also interested in your ideas for other topics and will be pleased to discuss tailoring sessions to meet your particular needs. Contact Cheryl Whitelaw at [cheryl.whitelaw@ualberta.ca](mailto:cheryl.whitelaw@ualberta.ca) for more information or to set up a session and at a location near you.

## JUN 13 - 16 2002

### The World's First Carl Czerny Music Festival and International Symposium

Event sponsored by University of Alberta Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies, Manfred & Elisabeth Wirth Endowment, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, U of A Department of Music, Gesellschaft Der Musikfreunde in Wien, Winspear Centre. The World's First Carl Czerny Music Festival and International Symposium. Festival Director: Anton Kuerti. For Ticket and Concert information, Festival packages \$95 (includes all seven concerts), Single tickets \$15 to \$40, call 1-800-563-5081 or 780-428-1414. For more information please see: <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/CCAUCES/> Location: Winspear Centre & The University of Alberta Convocation Hall.

## JUN 14 2002

### Centre for Health Promotion Studies - Research Day 2002

This year's theme is Health Promotion: Shaping Health Reform. The keynote speaker is Dr. David Butler-Jones, Chief Medical Officer, Province of Saskatchewan. For more information please visit our Web site at <http://www.chps.ualberta.ca>. Everyone welcome. Happens at Corbett Hall.

## JUN 14 2002

### International Institute for Qualitative

**Methodology** Research Methodology Workshop—"A Good Concept Analysis Is Half The Research." This workshop provide a one-day introduction to concept analysis as an empirical method. The supposition of qualitative research in general is, of course, that we cannot do without the voice of the people in the field that we are research. This definite truth seems to hide that a lot of relevant empirical information can be found in ordinary language. The basic suppositions of ordinary language are presented next to an elaborate example of this kind of research. Instructor: Dr. Bas Levering, University of Utrecht. Location: 6-10 University Extension Centre, 8303-112 Street.

## JUN 14 2002

Department of Public Health Sciences Environmental Health Sciences Seminar. Dr. Margaret-Ann Armour, Department of Chemistry, presents "Green Chemistry: Safety and Disposal Practices in the Laboratory." 2:00 p.m. Location: 10-120 Clinical Sciences Building.

## JUN 15 2002

**Saturday Walk (Trees and Shrubs)** Meet at noon at the Shop in the Devonian Botanic Garden and tour the Garden's extensive tree and shrub borders, many of them in full spring colour at the time. Horticulturist Gordon Nielson will be guiding the tour. Call (780) 987-2064 to book for an enjoyable spring walk! 12:00 noon.

## JUN 15 2002

**Silent Art Auction** Event sponsored by Society of Student Artists. Silent Art Auction. The group is having a silent art auction Saturday, June 15, starting at 7:00 p.m., in the basement of 10154-103 St. This is a great opportunity to buy local, original artwork at great prices! Call 707-8305 for details. Local Artists include: Royden Mills, Neil Fiertel, Sean Caulfield, Susan Kagan, Bianca Kahn, Linda Maines, Mark Bellows, Isla Burns and more to come! Web site: [societyofstudentartists.org](http://societyofstudentartists.org)

## JUN 18 2002

### Career and Placement Services (CaPS)

Workshop: Creating Resumes & Cover Letters that Work! Pre-register today at CaPS, 2-100 SUB and receive a FREE resume and cover letter consultation. Workshop runs from 9 a.m. - Noon. Location: CaPS Classroom; Rm 4-02 Students' Union Building.

## JUN 19 2002

### Career and Placement Services (CaPS)

Workshop: Interview Skills. Pre-register today at CaPS, 2-100 SUB and receive a voucher for a FREE mock interview consultation. Workshop runs from 9:30 a.m. - Noon. Location: CaPS Classroom; Rm 4-02 Students' Union Building.

## JUN 20 2002

**Lunch and Learn Presentation** Event sponsored by Health Promotion & WorkLife Services. Conflict & Cooperation (Part 1 of 3). Part 1 - Understanding Conflict. Presenter: Debbie Goethe, Lousage Institute. From 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. This 3 part lunch & learn series will help you understand the true nature of conflict, move from conflict to cooperation and look at practical ways to handle distracting and difficult people that you encounter. Part 1 of this series will help you identify the beliefs and attitudes you hold regarding conflict and what your triggers are. This session will help create a foundation of your understanding of conflict from your own starting point. Location: Heritage Lounge, Athabasca Hall.

## JUN 21 2002

### Department of Public Health Sciences

Environmental Health Sciences Seminar. Dr. Susan Andrew, Department of Medical Genetics, presents "DNA mismatch repair and tumourigenesis: Shedding light on response to UV damage." 2:00 p.m. Location: 10-120 Clinical Sciences Building.

## JUN 24 2002

### Kananaskis, the G8 and Global Health

Event sponsored by Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry; Faculty of Arts; Faculty of Law. "Kananaskis, the G8 and Global Health." From noon to 1:00 p.m. Following shortly after he addresses the People's Forum at the G8 in Calgary, Dr. Solomon Benatar, who has published widely on the ethics of disparity in a globalizing world, will address the issue of the social causes of health pandemics and the ethics of international relations that could contribute to reducing the impact of these health burdens. Dr. Benatar is a pulmonary

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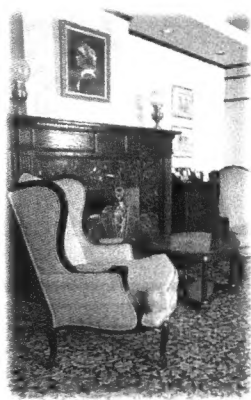
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physician from Cape Town, South Africa as well as a professor of medicine and director of the Bioethics Centre at the University of Cape Town. He is currently a visiting professor at the University of Toronto Joint Centre for Bioethics. Location: Bernard Snell Hall, Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre.

JUN 25 2002

**Lunch and Learn Presentation** Event sponsored by Health Promotion & WorkLife Services. Communication in Family Life (Part 3 of 3). Part 3 – Communication with our Aging Parents. Presenter: Peter Rajski, Wilson Banwell & Associates. From 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. When you are talking with aging parents and have some concern about how the communication may go, you are most likely talking about an important topic or an emotionally loaded topic. Important topics may be things such as figuring out where older parents should live, what kinds of help (if any) they need, who needs to know about their finances, what type(s) of health care services they should have, whether or not they have an up to date will or even whether or not someone else should have some legal power to act in their behalf, such as power of attorney or conservatorship. Join us for part 3 of this series to learn ways to effectively communicate with our aging parents. Location: Heritage Lounge, Athabasca Hall.

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# laurels

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- Dr. Clayton Deutsch, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
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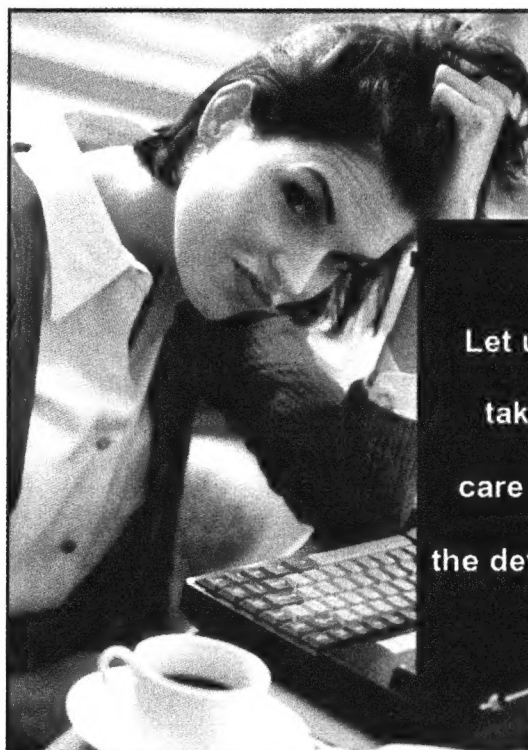


*All staff at the University of Alberta are welcome to attend.*

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**E-mail: [stephanie.laurence@hrs.ualberta.ca](mailto:stephanie.laurence@hrs.ualberta.ca)**  
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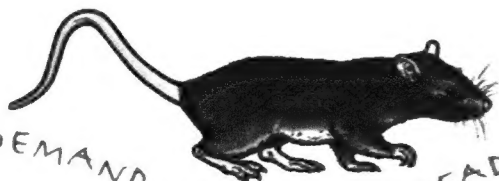
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# READING in the GUTTER



COMIC BOOKS DEMAND MORE FROM READERS

By Stephen Osadetz

"BETWEEN THE PANELS YOU'VE GOT TIMING, GESTURE, DIALOGUE, SOUND. YOU HAVE EVERYTHING, AND THAT'S WHAT DIFFERENTIATES COMICS FROM THE WRITTEN WORD. I LOVE THE WRITTEN WORD, BUT IT'S NOT NEARLY AS ALIVE." —GAIL DE VOS

Comic books fit into one of two categories. Either they're the spine-crunching, misogynistic gore-fests published by big companies like Marvel and DC, or they're the vacuous dime-store Archie comics. This is the common perception of comics, and it's the wrong perception, Professor Gail de Vos says. It's the perception she's trying to change.

de Vos offers an online course on comics through the University of Alberta's department of library and information studies. In this course, de Vos debunks the stereotypes and prejudices that strangle the subversive format.

Though de Vos says that picture books, a close cousin to comics, are a respected form of reading for young children, we are less accepting of comics as we grow older. "We're a visual society, so why are we closing off one avenue of visual expression?" de Vos wonders. "Because comics are pictures and text, it's assumed they can't be for serious readers, but actually, comic book reading is very difficult."

The central difference between comics and conventional print text isn't, surprisingly, the merging of pictures and words. Instead, de Vos says, what sets comics apart is the "gutter," the empty space separating one panel in a comic from another. This is where the action happens—the reader's imagination fills the white space with action, causing, for instance, Spiderman's hand to slam into the Green Goblin's skull.

Many people who aren't familiar with comic books and their bound partner, graphic novels, think the visual aspect of comics reduces the act of reading to a passive role. But because comics are effectively read "in the gutter," the actual reading of comics is just the opposite. de Vos goes so far as to say that "people who read comic books are probably much better readers than those who do not. ... Between the panels you've got timing, gesture, dialogue, sound. You have everything, and that's what differentiates comics from the written word. I love the written word, but it's not nearly as alive."

As the reader takes a primary role while reading a comic, the format has the potential to be much more than the conventional superhero narrative, which, no matter how bright the inks, how innovative the artwork, is inevitably drab and formulaic. Instead, de Vos prefers to focus on comics that realize their potential, works such as Art Spiegelman's Pulitzer Prize winning Maus, the story of a holocaust survivor, or Chris Ware's Jimmy Corrigan, the Smartest Kid in the World, also a multi-generational family story of emotional decay and renewal.

Fortunately, though, de Vos sees tectonic shifts happening in the comic book market. Readers, she says, are turning away from icons like Superman and tired titles such as those published by the big publishing houses.

Instead, subversive comics are becoming more prevalent, more read. And to further strengthen an intelligent comic readership, artists like Spiegelman are trying to create good entry-level comics for children. The hope, de Vos says, is that more people will start reading in the gutter. ■

## FURTHER READING:

- Professor de Vos' U of A Web site  
[http://www.slis.ualberta.ca/faculty\\_gdevos.htm](http://www.slis.ualberta.ca/faculty_gdevos.htm)
- Course outline: Comic Books and Graphic Novels in School and Public Libraries  
<http://www.quasar.ualberta.ca/tl-dl/courses/lis518404.html>
- Professor de Vos' Web Canadian Society of Children's Authors, Illustrators, and Performers Web site  
<http://www.canscaip.org/bios/devosg.html>
- Storytelling, Folktales, and Comic Book Format – an article by Gail de Vos  
[http://educ.queensu.ca/~landl/web/archives/vol31papers/Gail\\_DeVos.htm](http://educ.queensu.ca/~landl/web/archives/vol31papers/Gail_DeVos.htm)
- A Chronicle of Higher Education article about de Vos  
<http://chronicle.com/free/2001/12/2001120301u.htm>
- An Interview with de Vos at ravenstonepress.com  
<http://ravenstonepress.com/devos.html>

folio **back**  
page

Samplings from some of de Vos' favourite comics (clockwise from top left): the couple in the corner is drawn from Raymond Briggs' autobiographical Ethel & Ernest: A True Story; an imposing dragon and cliff-top castle can be found in Linda Medley's Castle Waiting; the ugly, little man frowning is from Neil Gaiman's Sandman series. The two rats are taken from Bryan Talbot's The Tale of One Bad Rat.

